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of pumpkins and green mealies for the evening meal. One woman, carrying a bundle of sugar-cane, is being tormented by two men who, despite her obvious unwillingness to give them any of it, are helping themselves; for people are thought to have a sort of right to picked sugar-cane, which is not a food, but like sweets among ourselves, something pleasing to the palate, to be shared with others. Last of all, and panting heavily, come the young girls who went to fetch wood, each with a heavy load on the head.

In the village some of the fires are already lit. One woman is cooking pumpkins for the evening meal. She cuts them into convenient pieces, removes the pips but not the outer skin, then packs them one above the other in a large pot, at the bottom of which there is a little water. A second pot, wide-mouthed and shallow, is inverted over the top, smeared down with a little of the red substance covering the seeds, and the whole allowed to steam over the fire. Green mealies for the evening meal are cooked in the same manner. Though pumpkin and mealies cooked in this way are very pleasant to eat, the European misses the salt, which is never added. Another woman is preparing some relish to eat with porridge from the morning. It grows darker and darker. The fires, some in the courtyard, some in the huts, but each the centre of a little family group, become a deeper crimson; their cheerful flickering giving one a sense of homeliness and quiet joy. At the courtyard fire where you are sitting, a small girl is cooking her tin of 'food', consisting of five treasured grasshoppers mixed with tomato, which she found growing in the kraal hedge. Every now and then she stirs this brew with a stick. The others are roasting mealies and nuts. A herdboy comes in and lays down beside his grandmother a bird he has killed. She is pleased with the gift, thanks him warmly and praises him by the praise of his name, 'You have done well, Dwagu, you who eat birds and take the heads to give your playmates' (*'U shumile Dwagu wa hu la dinonyana a jia dithoho a fa vasimana'*). If his name had been Boga, the praise would have run, 'Boga, it falls upon people, that thick bush of Mujaji of Muhale' (*Boga le wala vathu lenni la Mujaji a Muhale*); for almost every Lovedu name has its praise, whoever might bear it. Boys are always told by their grandmothers to bring them birds; this they like doing, for there are so many ways in which grandmothers can return the gesture—boiled *njugo* beans, monkey nuts, or sugar-cane being always welcome.

In the *khovo*, the three men of the village are sitting by their fire; the herdboys sit at another. The boys are listening to a spirited account of the ways of European farmers given by a boy of fourteen whose good clothes and white sandshoes testify to his having just returned from work. A boy, who has just been called to supper, comes back with a cake of porridge and some relish in his hands to eat it in male company in the *khovo*. Another goes home to eat, but returns later on. The conversation has veered round to the hunting of cane rats with wooden traps, the prevalent sport of this time of the year, when one of the boys comes with some monkey nuts which he has begged from an old woman. These are roasted in their shells in the fire and eaten by the company. Another has managed to obtain some mealies

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to roast. 'Let's ask riddles,' intervenes Khiebe. 'Here's one: Riddle-me-riddle-me-ree (*thaiii*), the witches are dancing on the thorns.' 'Stupid,' scornfully rejoins Mudumi. 'We all know that one. Hailstones, of course, for they bounce as they fall on the grass.' After pondering a moment he challenges: '*Thaiii*, the ox of my father has entered the pool, I remain holding its tail.' Roars of derision issue from the rest, 'A porridge-twirler,' they answer almost all together. The spiked head of a twirler is like the horns of an ox; it is thrust into the pot of water, while one holds it by its handle. 'Here's something you don't know,' comes from Mudumpani. '*Thaiii*, the nest of the water bird hangs down over the pool.' The company is silent, then there are some guesses, but it is beyond them, and they give it up. 'The eyelashes, of course,' says Mudumpani, 'because they hang over one's eyes.' Once the ball starts rolling, riddles follow one another in rapid succession. 'The babbling of a brook' turns out to be a calabash cup, for down its long handle beer gurgles as you drink; 'They always stand looking at each other' are the doorposts of a hut; and 'The chief entering the crimson (muddy) pool' is sunset. It is impossible to capture the poetry of these riddles; you cannot render their alliteration or play upon words in English. But it is clear that these youngsters are well versed in them. The time when riddles are most popular is, however, when a wedding party is present and the young people have to entertain them in their hut. On such an occasion riddles provide a mild form of competition between the two parties, that of the bride and that of the groom.

The men have retired to their huts, whence they will not reappear. The women have eaten the evening meal informally round the fires and are just chatting. In a hut three girls are sitting by candlelight, one of them, who has been to school, writing a love-letter for her friend to her lover in town. 'Why are you throwing me over?' she asks. 'Why don't you write? Please send me a nice cloth and a blanket, but not one like that which you gave your wife!' In another hut some children have persuaded Mamujaji, an elderly woman, to tell them tales. She begins, '*Dgano-Dgano* (a story, a story).' They reply, '*Dgano*.' 'Once upon a time,' she continues, but before she gets further they again interject, '*Dgano*.' Then she goes on, 'There lived a boy who had sores all over his body.' '*Dgano*,' they repeat whenever the speaker hesitates or takes breath. 'One day when the girls went to fetch grass. . . .' This is the beginning of a story about a bird who gives away the girls who kill the boy. A marked characteristic is the frequent occurrence of a song and refrain, during the telling of the tale, in this case, '*Phogu, Phogu ya Dzowa*, &c. ('Bird, bird of the south'), so that what with the interjections and singing of the chorus of the refrain, the listeners appear to take as active a part in the story as the narrator herself. At the end of each tale there is a long-drawn-out '*Dganeno*' and all spit into the fire. In the small villages of to-day story-telling has almost completely died out. Where there are only one or two present a story loses most of its charm, and there are many young men and women who know practically no stories, more particularly among Christians, whose parents prefer them to learn their lessons rather than tell them stories.

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CHAPTER IV

CO-OPERATION AND EXCHANGE

Arrangements of and changes in the work-party, partnerships, and solitary occupations—relative roles of economic and goodwill exchanges—beer, dances and bride-price as vehicles of reciprocal exchanges—aversion from business.

181 To convert to his use the material resources upon which man relies for subsistence, some organization of labour is necessary; man must co-ordinate his energies with those of his fellow man. He must co-operate with some and he may consider himself as a competitor of others. The Lovedu is an individualist, but life is hardly regarded as a competitive struggle, even in respect of the things that are limited in supply. Men aim, not so much at achievement and riches, as at maturity and self-sufficiency. There is no single scale of attainments by which men measure themselves against one another. Moderate success is credited to industry, but immoderate success may be suspect; he who reaps much more than his neighbours is in danger of being looked upon as an enemy in league with anti-social forces. The Lovedu do not display either their emotions or their possessions; ostentation is appropriate only to states of exhilaration. Self-expression finds its legitimate scope, not in worsting a rival, but in a gradually expanding responsibility and prestige. The society has a hierarchical framework so constructed that rank and age interpose themselves between possible competitors. This does not mean that there is no competition, but the great emphasis is upon co-operation.

476 The two methods by which men pool their resources in order to provide for their primary needs are working together in mutual helpfulness and exchanging the products of their labour. Co-operative working together arises chiefly in agricultural and building activities, where its main purpose is easily intelligible; exchanges are not felt to bear such a direct relation to the differentiated needs and activities of men. Yet fundamentally co-operation and exchange are part of the same system of values. Mutual helpfulness is highly esteemed and aggressive exploitation deeply despised. In the co-operative situation these values are intrinsically present; but the exchange situation must be reconstituted to bring it into harmony with them. The problem in co-operative situations is to harmonize with them the individualism of the peasant; the problem of exchange situations is to eliminate the idea of a commercial transaction; and in both types of situations this is done by the stress upon reciprocity. The purely economic aspect tends to become wholly obscured, except in modern forms of co-operation and exchange. In them the helper becomes a servant and exchanges become 'biznis' (business). Service and 'biznis' are tolerated only so far as they conform to the old pattern and values.

476 571 The *lejoma*, which is the most distinctive form of co-operative work, consists of a more or less casual group of workers. Neighbours, relatives,

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and friends—indeed anyone—may join the group and help in the task, usually agricultural, which is being performed. But the group that collects for the occasion is not wholly fortuitous; relatives and neighbours always predominate. There is no elaborate pre-arrangement. The *lejema*-giver usually announces his *lejema* beforehand and invites some people to come. Women, who brew the beer, usually organize more than men, some of whom rely on those they can collect on their way down to the field that is to be hoed or weeded or reaped. People who are invited are not bound to give an excuse for not coming; it is far more usual to promise to come and not to come than to give an excuse which, whatever it is, can hardly be valid in a society where people are not considered to be bound by time or by their previous engagements. Moreover, the beer for the *lejema* may not yet have matured on the day fixed by the *lejema*-giver. People may have come from long distances, but they will not be annoyed; there is sure to be a beer party in progress quite near. On the other hand, the *lejema*-giver will not complain if those who promised to come do not put in an appearance, for he knows that since 'the far-off well causes thirst', it is better to drink by the way.

Often, though the beer may be ready, no work is possible on the day. The weather may be unpropitious, some important event may require rearrangement of the activities of the day, or sometimes work may be taboo because of a death or hail or the first rain after a period of drought. In these circumstances, the beer must nevertheless be consumed; it is not something that can await the convenience of man. And to those who partake, it is announced that the *lejema* has been converted into a *phodwa*—that is to say, the drinkers are not mere drinkers, but a potential labour force that may be expected to do a day's work at some future date. The arrangement is so vague that we cannot fit it into any of our conceptions, such as a promise to perform or a right to demand the labour. The *lejema*-giver may, if he has a good supply of corn, give beer again when he calls those who previously drank of the *phodwa*. A *phodwa* is essentially a pre-arranged *lejema* which has miscarried; but it may be fortuitous—for instance, when one has to kill a pig against which neighbours have complained. A social occasion at which one gives beer cannot be converted into a *phodwa*. Sometimes, when supplies are low or for other reasons no beer can be provided, a man invites a group of people to work for him in anticipation of a beer party, also called a *phodwa*, at a future date. But only very special circumstances justify these departures from the *lejema*.

According to our standards, activities at a *lejema* appear to be very haphazard and unorganised. Each member of the group contributes to one end, the execution of the task which is to benefit the *lejema*-giver; but the effort of each worker is not individually assessed; some may turn up when the work begins, others join in much later, even perhaps just before the workers prepare to go home. The work proceeds in a leisurely manner, without undue exertion; no special achievement is expected from any one and the organization is such that the most inexperienced and dilatory can keep pace with the most efficient. Efficiency is as little a matter for comment as inefficiency. There is no rivalry, no spirit of

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calculation, no supervision. The adjustments in the situation rely upon no pre-organization; there is practically no leadership or direction; and yet an effective interaction is attained. The total pattern is a part of the social system; it is not as if two or more people have casually encountered one another and have by trial and error to discover how to co-operate effectively in performing the task. Christians, whose standards of organization, performance, and efficiency are derived from those of the white man, attempt to submit the workers to discipline. They sometimes constitute themselves as foremen, they attempt to apply the available energy systematically, they have a system of rewards and penalties. The result is, not co-operation, but service; there are few, if any, songs and the occasion is no longer a gala social event.

The workers at a *lejema* usually adjourn after one and a half or two hours to refresh themselves at about 11 a.m., when a pot of beer, euphemistically called 'the knife-sharpener', is brought to the field. The interval is of indefinite duration and is so much out of harmony with modern ideas, that 'the knife-sharpener' is often regarded with disfavour; instead of sharpening, it blunts the edge of activity in the modern situation, in which the *lejema*-giver thinks of himself as an employer and the workers are concerned to avoid being exploited. Neither employer nor employee is equipped by his background of culture and training to achieve success in these new roles; and the result is that tensions arise. Fortunately, however, the *lejema* is still overwhelmingly a collective social event. There is as yet no need to buoy up labour with dignity and moral worth; it is sufficient to submerge it in the sociability of beer. For the real nature of the *lejema* appears when the workers go to the home of the *lejema*-giver. The situation there instantly dispels any preconception we may have of special rewards for the workers. There are visitors, dubbed *vahobedi* (solicitants) and as such are distinguished from the *vashumi* (workers). In our society they would be called 'gate-crashers' or 'beggars', but they are not in needy circumstances and do not ask for favours; they are entitled to join in. Individually they not only imbibe calabash for calabash with the workers, but far outnumber them, not unusually by as much as four or five to one.

To judge the situation correctly, we must remember that begging, one of the traits of the Lovedu we might regard as most irritating, is not socially disapproved. He who has and does not give is the offender, not he who asks for what he needs. The case is different, however, when the beggar is a loafer and sponger, roaming about in search of beer without doing any work; and if, as is not unlikely, he is disliked, his presence during the exhilaration caused by the beer is liable to cause a breach of the peace and he might be turned away. Generally speaking, *vashumi* are not given special beer; the beer is not a reward for their services, but a feast transforming work into recreation and reflecting the emphasis upon liberality. To-day the *vahobedi* are sometimes looked upon as parasitic beggars, and measures are taken to reconstitute the *lejema* so as to make it a more economical method of co-operation. Fundamentally, all the arduous work is still done by *lejema*, though every one knows that, for, say, 4*s.* worth of salt, more workers could be obtained and better

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work accomplished than if one had beer made at the cost of 10s. worth of corn, not to mention the time, labour, and firewood that is consumed in preparing the beer. The motive is, however, not economic but social. *Majema* are used, not for long and difficult tasks only, but also for light work, which a man can easily do himself without help. The aim in these cases is not so much to complete the work quickly—time is rarely a matter of importance—as to be credited with generous impulses and to have a pleasant social event. Christians, with their more Europeanized outlook, averse from the waste entailed, and fearing excommunication by the Church, which prohibits beer, nevertheless find it hard not to conform to this custom.

Another form of co-operation is the *khilcbc* (*jcbc*, a hoe). Uncommon to-day in its original form, it has its essentials preserved in ploughing partnerships, the so-called 'stock fair' in towns and particularly in the collective agricultural work of young girls. The co-operating group, defined by convenience and proximity of domicile, is largely a local one and consists mainly of close relatives, both on the mother's and on the father's side. The group is still comparatively stable, as it was in the old days, when it had its basis in common interests and common needs. Its members collectively reaped or weeded or hoed one another's fields, completing one field and then going to the next, and each arranged about his own food. Kin or neighbours had their lands closer together and less split up than to-day; they started their various tasks at much the same time; there was safety in concentration, and economy in co-operation. The great distinction between *khilcbc* and *lejema* was and still is that no beer is provided; but, as in the *lejema*, the *khilcbc* partnership lessened the monotony of arduous work and mobilized energies and incentives. As the group was smaller and more closely knit, relied more tangibly upon reciprocity and had more elements of continuity, the stimulus of beer was not necessary to hold it together. Each partner remained an individualist, for the crops were not shared; but each realized the value of mutual helpfulness and the necessity of minimizing the self in relation to the ends of others.

To-day the conditions of the operation of the *khilcbc* no longer exist in their old form. Fields have become split up; the old dangers are no more; the plough has vastly decreased man's dependence upon the help of his kin or his neighbour. Though it was perhaps the most potent agent of destruction of the old *khilcbc*, the plough has become the centre of the new. The household, which is the economic unit, hardly ever has ploughs, animals, and workers all available at the same time; only 30 per cent. of such units possess ploughs and only 15 per cent. have cattle or donkeys. Thus cultivation calls for some form of co-operation, and the form which was familiar was the *khilcbc*. There are new elements in the situation, but their co-ordination was effected by drawing upon pre-existing patterns of co-operation. Typically the *khilcbc* in ploughing consists of four partners, representing four economic units: one supplies the animals, a second the plough, the third some of the workers, and the fourth the herdboy, who looks after the cattle during the year and might wield the whip or plant behind the plough. The emphasis

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is upon the sharing of tools rather than upon that sharing of services which characterized the old *khilcbc*. But in the old institution hoes were borrowed from one another and the differentiation of to-day was not unknown, though it took a different form. The organization implies a person-to-person adjustment rather than institutionalized leadership, except that he who provides the animals sometimes tends to dictate whose lands have first to be ploughed. No payment passes, however unequal the contributions or needs of the partners, and sometimes an old widow is a partner who can contribute nothing at all. The essence of the whole institution is a complete disregard of the exact equivalences of the contributions or of the services.

This form of co-operation, in which mutual helpfulness and reciprocity and not economic advantage are stressed, finds expression in many activities. Among Christians there are potters who club together; usually they are kin who live in the same settlement. The only work they share is the excavation of the clay; each works quite independently of the other, though advice is exchanged. Men often build *ga khilcbc* instead of *ga lejema*, but in this case the association is a very loose one, consisting merely of the available friends or relatives in or near the village; and though some small gift is given by the owner of the hut built, the main feature of the co-operation is a sense of mutuality and reciprocity. The conception of mutual helpfulness recedes before that of profit when, as is becoming more common, the person for whom the work is done pays a reward in money. Curious anomalies occur, because sometimes less, sometimes more, consideration is given to the exact money equivalence of the services rendered. Where a man considers that he is paying wages for services, he usually models his behaviour upon his conception of the European employer and the whole pattern of reciprocity falls to the ground. But this model is very unpopular, though for the employer it has distinct advantages; as he contracts for the labour, he can requisition it when he wants it and can control its execution. He is no longer an equal partner, but a foreman.

One development of the *khilcbc* which is seen in townships is the 'stock fair'. It is practicable only where each of the partners periodically receives cash wages. Every month one of the partners, taken in rotation, is entitled to a fixed amount from each of the others, the purpose being to make available to every one in turn a fairly large sum of money. Though the partners wear some distinctive dress, the association is very unstable and many as a result suffer loss. The 'stock fair', far though it be removed from the *khilcbc*, is thus based on a generalization from past experience in which social ends are attained by the application of rule-of-thumb principles, with little resort to trial and error and little dependence on organizing ability or on individual leadership.

With the various forms of co-operation, we may briefly contrast solitary occupations and services. It is somewhat unusual for any one alone to undertake a large task, and among heathens it is rarer still for an individual to hire out his services. There is no real domestic service; even in the royal household, *vulada* is very different from service in our sense of the term. The *mulada*, usually an orphan, is the ward of his

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CHAPTER VI

SOME SOCIAL GROUPINGS

Groups in the tribe—analysis of the groups of a district—character, divisions, and subdivisions of groups—the patrilineal lineage as the core of co-residence—marriage groups, age sets, and regimentation.

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THE Lovedu tribe is not, in the main, a body of kinsmen tracing descent from a single far-off ancestor. The nuclear or royal group are the Lovedu proper. They are, strictly speaking, *kwevo*, though you will very rarely hear this word, because it and its praise-title are associated with *hu kwevha*, to elongate the *labia minora*. Ignoring popular usage and Lovedu sensitiveness, we may still call them *kwevo*, leaving to posterity to decide whether the name will survive or be lost in oblivion. This nuclear group, the *kwevo*, constitutes no more than 10 per cent. of the tribe; or, in other words, only one person in every ten bears the nuclear group name, *kwevo*, which we must think of as a patrilineal descent name, not unlike such oft-recurring surnames as Jones or Smith among us. There are numerous other group names and people bearing different names of this kind may be regarded as having originally been unrelated. They constitute over 90 per cent. of the tribe.

It is obvious that in these circumstances very strong bonds must exist to maintain the allegiance of the non-related groups, just as, among us, a vast network of institutions, of interlinked organizational systems, ramifying throughout the society, exists side by side with common sentiments of loyalty and of solidarity. But the interlinking machinery is very different from ours, and neither nationalism nor ideology is important as unifying sentiments or principles. There are important structural links which, on the one hand, form part of the social system and on the other are intimately bound up with the political system; and in this way both kinship and *munywalo*, or bride-price, are used to strengthen the solidarity of the tribe as a unit. These links are discussed elsewhere. They make good the absence of the bonds between the nuclear ruling group and the other groups. There are, for instance, the fundamental reliance upon the rain-making powers of the queen, the periodical tribute to the queen by the districts, and the national organization of some of the 'schools'. In this chapter we are concerned to point out some of the social groupings in relation to one another and to the solidarity of the tribe. The great work they have to do in the society will be realized when we remember how complicated and all-pervasive in our society are the links which unite us to one another and to the state. The work is all the greater in a society in which the language is the language of a group larger than the tribe, the historical background and traditions are not uniform, but diverse, governmental machinery is incipient and hardly impinges upon the subject, and there cannot be said to be much organization of common interests and ideals.

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571 619 565 The first thing that strikes us is the large number of constituent groups in the tribe. Some of these groups are totemic, others are not, they come from all points of the compass. They are not clans in the accepted sense of the word and have no functions as such. They are so interwoven with the nuclear group, the Lovedu, and with one another, that it is not easy to disentangle them; they are usually interspersed with the general population, but, for one reason here and another there, they may be more or less concentrated in some part of the country. It is chiefly through the district organization that they become linked, upon the pattern of kinship, of marriage and bride-price, with the nuclear group. These groups are not arranged in any definite hierarchy of rank, though rank is of very great importance in the society. Yet there are distinctions between them: some are as honoured as the Lovedu themselves; some are regarded as rather of lower status, though intermarriage with them is not disapproved; others, mostly of non-Sotho origin, are despised and intermarriage with them is frowned upon.

[565] 621 571 613 This does not mean that there are institutionalized classes; there are no rigid lines cutting across the society, just as there are no definite functions that may be said to hold together these constituent groups. Functions of a political nature are bound up with the districts, not with the constituent groups as such; some religious and ritual functions are also bound up with the districts, but most of them (except those of national importance) are connected with kin groups, and this never means the whole constituent group and, indeed, usually not the lineage, but people from both sides of the family. Yet the lineage as a descent group has at least legal significance and to it are attached certain rights. On the whole, however, the lineages pale into significance beside the marriage or the bilateral kin groups. There is structural tension between the group which gives the brides and the group which gives the cattle; but one notices in ordinary life not so much the tension as the elaborate measures for maintaining good relations. Not only do the relations between these two groups obtrude themselves more prominently than those within the patrilineal lineages, but it is the main concern of judicial proceedings in the *khoro*, the most impressive feature of public life, to preserve harmony between them. There is ample reason for this emphasis because the whole social structure and, through it, the whole tribal system and the strongest bonds with the queen, depend upon the proper functioning of these groups. And these are again a part of, and supported by, the bilateral kin, who, with the cattle, the one relying on the other, constitute the ultimate basis of the social structure.

[561] 571 There are also age-groupings in the society. They have some wide integrating functions, but on the whole the organization into regiments is unimpressive and for national purposes of little value. The hierarchy of age plays a part of importance, however, as a regulative device; but it is not coincident with the hierarchy of rank and thus often occasions serious tensions in the social structure. Finally, we should remind the reader, though we cannot deal with them here, of groupings brought about by modern conditions. There is the more or less compact Christian group, with its divergent interests and loyalties, and the very scattered

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group of sophisticated men who, influenced by their experiences of European town life, have acquired values and needs disruptive of the old alinements. They have already come to our notice. But if we deal with them, we must also discuss the disturbances in the old settled spheres of men as distinguished from women. For this and for any elaboration of the manifold aspects of the various social groupings touched upon in this chapter we have no room. It will be sufficient to draw attention to a few points only.

Let us look briefly at the tribe as a whole. We shall obtain some impression of its constituent elements by merely listing the group names of the various district heads. For the moment it is sufficient to accept this name as a kind of distinctive designation; it may be the name of a totem or a place, of a dynasty or a tribe. Within the effective jurisdiction of the queen, which extends considerably beyond the reserve and the tribal farms, the following group names of district heads are found: thirty-four district heads bearing the name *kwɛvo Muhale*, or the name of the royal group; sixteen Elephants, mostly of very different ancestries and very divergent places of origin; nine *kwɛvo raudigwa* or *vamudiga*; fifteen *kwɛvo rathɔle* or *vamahasha*, both spoken of as 'brothers' of the royal group, and also four *kwɛvo mutshazi* or *vamavulana* not originally related but now the great maternal uncles of the queen's group; eleven Crocodiles, mostly from the west, but some with secondary designations indicating probable diverse ancestries; thirteen Venda, some with, some without totems, some from as near as Tswale, others from as far as Mpefu; five Lions whose interrelations, if they exist at all (coming as they do from such different directions and at such different times), are wholly obscure and lost in oblivion; and besides these, smaller numbers of Leba, those curious kosher-killing, exclusive wanderers with their moon ritual from the north, of Wild Dogs from the highveld, Khalaga and Dibanyika from Rhodesia, of Shangana-Tonga of various branches of that great group of peoples whose tenure of headship is only half recognized, of Koni who, in proportion to their numbers, hold very few districts, not to mention Ramafalo, who is a Pig of Luɔdɛ, one *kwɛvo madavele*, a few Sia of Levia, and several sub-heads under the *vamamadeba* who are descended from Mugɔdɔ, the last of the Lovedu kings.

It is not to be thought that the relative number of heads of this or that constituent group in any way reflects the number of people of that group in the tribe. There is, for instance, a considerable population of Porcupines, of Impalas, of Mbɛni, of Goats, but there are no district heads of these groups or clusters. Nor must we conceive of these groups as entities having something more in common than their name and, where it has not been lost in oblivion, a background of history and tradition. There is no solidarity between their members. Where some of them live together in a district, it is their relationship to the head or the emphasis upon the common life of the territorial unit that holds them together rather than any conception of a link with a far-off ancestor or of a mystical bond with their totem. They are said to swear (*hu ana*) by their totem, which is sometimes called *mayano* (what is sworn by), sometimes *mutapo* (what is grouped together)—these two words are occasionally sharply

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571 622 619 distinguished, but more often, especially among the common people, they are identified or hopelessly confused. But if to swear by one's totem means something in some cases and among some groups, it usually signifies as little as when we swear by Jupiter.

571 49 Before embarking upon a further elucidation of these names, let us look more closely at an area in Ŭulovedu so as to obtain a better idea of the distribution and nature of these constituent groups. We select an area towards the south-west, of about four square miles, because if we go to the centre we shall obtain an exaggerated impression of the proportion of *kwɔvɔ*, the royal group, whereas in the extreme north we may well think that we are in a tribe of Shangana-Ṭonga.

[161] In this area, which has a population of about 830 people, there are, counting the group names of both men and women, Elephants, Cattle, Crocodiles, Leopards, Porcupines, Goats, Lions, Pigs, Duikers, Impala, Wild Dogs, Khalaga and Sia without totem, besides a fair sprinkling of Shangana-Ṭonga and even people using the name Zimbabwe. There are two individuals calling themselves Oorlams, one Bush and one Kapa (Cape coloured), which is most unusual and does not reflect the position in the tribe as a whole. There are, finally, some whom we must merely designate Venda because, as they say, they swear by no animal or object and they do not know to what Venda group they belong. That is not the end of the matter, for in the Elephants (*ɖou*) cluster there are fifteen different groups. Some of them may be remotely related, but they distinguish themselves by different secondary names and know of no common ancestry or of any links in the past; indeed, as they come from very different parts, they positively deny a common origin. For instance, there are *ɖou* of Khalaga, recent-comers from Rhodesia, *ɖou* of Tsubye, far away to the south-east near Phalaborwa, *ɖou* of Thovolo in the Game Reserve to the north-east, *ɖou* of Ravothata, the messengers, it is said, of the royal group when they migrated from Rhodesia, *ɖou* of Sefareni, whose nearest relatives are in Nareni (Mahlo) country. Similarly, there are ten different groups of Lions: some, like the Khiɔga, were the aboriginal inhabitants, who are said to have known no fire and no political organization, and were ousted by the Lovedu; others, like those of Selowa, come from the far east with the cult of the possessed, which they might have adopted from the Ndau in Portuguese Moçambique, and still others hail from Vendaland and Ŭuḍɔkwa. There are likewise clusters of Crocodiles with four, of Duikers with four, of Pigs, Khalaga, Sia, Impala and Wild Dogs, each with two different secondary designations (division or group names). Among the Shangana-Ṭonga, though they are comparatively few in number, there are no less than four different totems and nine different other names (*shibongo*), such as Loyi, Khosa, Mavunda, Mathie and Ngoveni. Reckoning all the differently named groups as distinct, we have over sixty such groups in this area alone.

The following table gives a rough representation of the position in the area in question:

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PEOPLE IN AN AREA OF FOUR SQUARE MILES, WITH A POPULATION OF *c.* 830

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Cluster	Percent. of Population	No of Groups	Remarks
1. Elephant	14	15	Groups very divergent as to tribe (including Sotho, Venda, Khalaga, Leba —Shangana-Tonga. Elephants are enumerated under 7, below), place of origin and time of immigration. Majority of groups reducible probably to common, very far back, but now forgotten ancestor. A fortuitous cluster.
2. Khalaga	14	2	No animal or object of reverence. Mostly recent-comers and directly from the north. Interrelations obscure, but some appear to be Sothoized Shangana-Tonga or Nyai.
3. Pig	11·8	2	One of the groups, the *kwɛvo*, is of the royal nucleus and has further subdivisions; the other is from Mamavolo, a tribe which split from the Lovedu about 250 years ago. The two groups no longer acknowledge relationship. A genetic cluster.
4. Lion	11·8	10	Groups very divergent as to tribe (Sotho, Venda, Khiɔga) and time of immigration. Some are aboriginal and were thinly scattered over a wide area, and their common ancestor, if any, has been forgotten; these aborigines cannot even remotely be linked with recent-comers from the north (Ɔirwa), from the east (Thɔvɔlɔ) and from the south (Pedi). A fortuitous cluster.
5. Porcupine	11·2	2	Said to be distinct from one another, coming at very different times from Phalavorwa and from Thavina; the connexion between them, if any, is obscure and is denied.
6. Duiker	8	4	These are all Koni and the secondary designation refers to four tribes (Khaha of Maupa, Maake, and Mamija, all of whom are Koni, and the Letswalo). A genetic cluster.
7. Shangana-Tonga	8·3	13	Four are totemic, totems being borrowed from the Sotho; the rest have retained their *shibongo*. Some came before the great migration, 1840–94; others as part of it. Still call themselves Tonga, but come from very different parts of Tongaland.

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Cluster	Per cent. of Population	No. of Groups	Remarks
8. Crocodile	6·9	4	Groups are reducible probably to two genetic clusters, the Kwena of Dudupi, who are Ngwato from Bechuanaland, and the Kwena from Khimosa in the east near the Game Reserve.
9. Mbezi	3·5	1	People from East Vendaland, who are probably Nyai. All river animals are taboo to them.
10. Cattle	3·2	1	All from Nareni originally and largely as a result of the transportation of the Letswalo in 1894. But some came later.
11. Goat	3·0	1	All Venda, i.e. of the Kwinde group. Have lost the Venda observance of peeling the skin off the goat's tail before killing, which is still practised by the Tswale tribe near by.
12. Impala	2·4	2	Some of them are from the north, some from the east. The Lovedu are sometimes also called *phala*, but the true significance of that is obscure. *Phala* in the east (Phalaborwa) are regarded as having had no fire, and were ousted by fire.
13. Sia	1·3	2	Appear to have been neighbours of the Lovedu since very early times, living to the north of them. Some come from the Mashau (Venda); others from Molepo. Affinities obscure.
14. Venda	0·4	1	Venda who cannot trace their origin or ancestry to any definite group; not all related.
15. Zimbabwe	0·3	1	People from the north; they also call themselves Khalaga. Do not know the Zimbabwe ruins.
16. Wild Dog	0·2	2	Probably these two groups are related, but the relationship is not recognized; all we can say is that they are Sotho.
17. Leopard	0·2	1	Recent-comers from the highveld (Dokwa).

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Cluster	Per cent. of Population	No. of Groups	Remarks
18. Bush	0·2	1	Said to be Vaalpens; a mixture of Bush and Bantu. From the towns.
19. Kapa and Oorlam	0·2	1	Cape coloured. The word 'Oorlam' has a special connotation, implying sophistication. From town.
20. Springbok	0·1	1	Origin obscure; come from Phalaborwa.
Total	100·0	67	

This is the position in a single area. It is somewhat more complicated in the tribe as a whole; we certainly would not like to say how many clusters, groups, and sub-groups are to be found; and as for disentangling their origins and histories, and linking them up with common ancestors, that is a task which, if it can be successfully undertaken at all, will require infinite labour and extensive research. For our present purpose, it will be sufficient to indicate the nature of these groups. And let us first consider the nuclear group.

If you ask a Lovedu what his *mutupo* (group name) is, he might say *kwɔvo*; some, however, will say Wild Pig (*golovɔ*). But upon closer examination it will be found that *golovɔ* is really the *muyano*, though this is not a word that many of the other groups use. Certainly the name *golovɔ* includes, not only the royal group, but also groups in several other tribes: Mamaila, Sekhopo, and Rakwadu are also Pigs of Muhale. The Pigs of Luɔde, the Ramafalo, are associated with the Venda, though there are many in Vulovedu and since long ago some of the important national doctors assisting with the initiation 'schools' have come from this group. The Ramafalo are not regarded as being of the same group as the royal group, but they are nearer to it than the Mamavolo, Pigs of Maɖaji, who live on the highveld and with whom all, except the very oldest men and women, strenuously deny any relationship whatever. There is certainly nothing in common between the Pigs of Muhale and the Pigs of Maɖaji; even their customs and institutions differ more widely than those of the Lovedu do from such unrelated neighbours as the Khaha or the Nareni. There are quite a number of Pigs of Maɖaji, especially in the south-western districts of Vulovedu, and they are, of course, also scattered among many other tribes.

There are no all-pervasive bonds between these scattered *golovɔ* people; there are merely bonds within the families and lineages of which they are made up. With their relatives in Vulovedu, who are not Pigs at all, their bonds are much closer than with people of the group name who fall outside the kin. If, again, we consider the Pigs of Muhale, we shall find that the relationship between their branches Mamaila, Rakwadu, and Sekhopo, on the one hand, and the royal group in Vulovedu, on the

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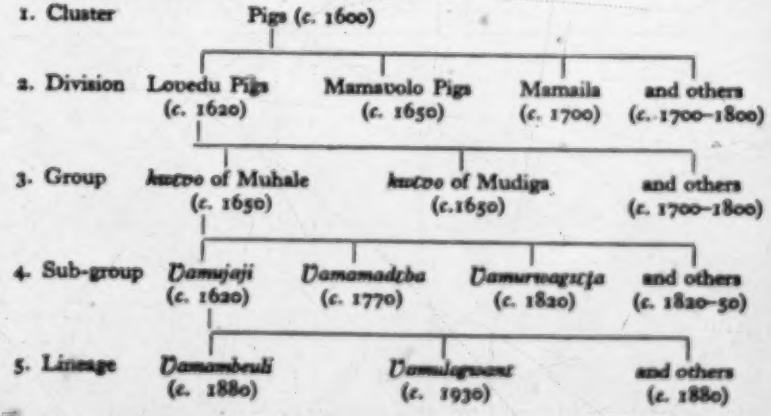
other, is hardly a close one; it is certainly not as close as that between the groups, the Mudiga, the Mahasha, and the royal family, which came into existence long before the Rakwadu and Sekhopo broke away. The Mudiga and the Mahasha are not clans; they have the same *mutupo* and *muyano* as the royal group, but each has his own distinctive praise (*khirtdo*), though there are also distinctive praises of still further sub-divisions, the sub-groups, especially when a member of such sub-group is a district head.

The process of division and subdivision can be traced back to the very earliest times; but there are specific periods when the tendency towards division was specially marked, often coinciding with national crises, the parcelling out of new districts to relatives of the royal group, or the emergence of outstanding personalities. To-day in the royal family it is curious to observe how some of the sons of the queen's deceased brother say they are Mulogwane, others that they are Mujaji. They have strenuous arguments about the matter, as they are not quite sure whether the new designation is in imitation of surnames among Christians or in accordance with precedents of the past.

To sum up the position and to clarify the confusion somewhat we may state the position as follows:



There is, first, the all-inclusive group which we may call the *cluster* (1) of the Pigs. This is a genetic cluster because, although it is not generally recognized that all the Pigs are related or descendants of a single ancestor, their group histories are interconnected. Clusters are not all genetic; nor are they all totemic. In a fortuitous cluster, such as that of the Elephants or Lions, the histories cannot be linked up and no genetic relationships can be established or are recognized in any sense at all. Within the fortuitous cluster there may be smaller genetic clusters—for instance, some Lions or Elephants who have a common ancestor. The genetic cluster has large *divisions* (2), sections that broke away completely very long ago—for instance, the Lovedu Pigs or *kwevo* and the Mamavolo Pigs, with whom relationship is only very faintly recognized as a matter of

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history and by a few of the oldest men, and also more recent segments, such as the Mamaila Pigs and the Pigs of Sekhopo, with whom relationship is recognized fairly generally, but as a matter of form. Two individuals of such divisions cannot, however, concretely trace relationship. Within the divisions there are *groups* (3), such as the *kuavo* of Muhale, of Mudigs and so on, some very old, some of more recent date. These are real groups, however, in which some bonds exist, such as a common praise, and a few specially placed individuals can trace relationship to one another. These groups, again, are divided into *sub-groups* (4) of various orders and arising at various times, such as the *vamujaji*, who came into existence 100 years ago. According as we go further and further back, less and less people can trace relationship, and the sub-group imperceptibly merges into the group. On the whole, however, in spite of infinite variations, distant lineal relationship is generally recognized, but it is not given concrete expression in kinship terminology or in behaviour patterns. Finally, we have a further sub-division, which we call the *lineage* (5), between the members of which kinship terms and behaviour patterns come into play, to a greater or lesser extent according to the operation of a large number of circumstances, such as family pride, contiguous residence, agreement among one another, and so on. There are lineages in the process of being formed to-day, such as the *vamulogwane*, the children of Mulogwane, who died in 1934; but at present they are still members of a family, acting in concert in domestic situations, with which the lineage is usually not concerned at all.

Each of these, from the cluster to the lineage, as we have defined them, is functionally distinct in some ways; but they do not have distinctive generic names. We must not make the mistake of thinking that they are sharply demarcated from one another. The patrilineal alinement is secondary; it is overshadowed by the territorial alinement, which may cut across and break up the solidarity of the comparatively small and closely linked lineage. The largest group or cluster, such as the *goloec*, has no cohesion whatsoever. This is evident among the *goloec*; but it is much clearer among such clusters as the Elephants and the Lions, in which the groups bearing the names Elephant or Lion with a secondary designation may not be segments of a single original group at all. It is quite evident that a Sholoana-Tonga Elephant cannot have any common ancestor with a Sotho Elephant; it is equally clear that there can hardly be any relationship between Elephants of Selowa, of Sia, and of Sefareni, for the Selowa people are from the north-east and the Sia and Sefareni, though local, have entirely different histories and ultimate origins.

The names by which people designate themselves cannot be relied upon to establish relationship. A man may designate his group or ancestry or tribe by a totem or chief or dynasty or place or other name or a combination of these. Tradition records several unaccountable or arbitrary changes in these designating names, even in totems; often a non-totemic group adopts a totem of another group or a totemic group adds to its existing totems with subsequent loss of some. And this process occurs, not only in respect of totems or primary names, but also in respect of secondary names. There is a word (*phodzoulugo* or *khapa-mutupo*) for

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571 619 a person who, not merely when he has no legal father, takes the totem or secondary name of another group. We can, therefore, make no off-hand deductions from the names. Identity or similarity of name may or may not imply similar ancestry. A positive assertion of similarity or identity based upon the similarity or identity of the descriptive name is not conclusive; it may merely reflect a present sense of being related, important in itself, but with no basis in history or fact. It is by no means easy to deal with a situation of such infinite complexity; and from our present point of view there is no need to do so. Except where the name is significant for some other purpose, not that of reckoning relationship as such, and except within the functioning unit, little attention is given to these names. For the purposes of rank within the tribe, against other tribal units, it is important to designate oneself, not Elephant or Lion, but Lovedu. But when we have said this as regards the general position, we have also, as in everything else, to begin pointing out exceptions.

571 365 619 An Elephant of Ravothaṭa has as such nothing in common with an Elephant, say, of Selowa. Their backgrounds, their origins, even their customs, are conceived to be different. The Elephant of Ravothaṭa have come in recent years to tolerate the Elephant of Selowa; intermarriage is beginning to establish bonds, and common allegiance to the queen is breaking down the old barriers; yet on the whole an Elephant of Selowa is a *murɨha*, a person of the low country, not fit to aspire to such high positions in the tribe as the Elephants of Ravothaṭa. The *murɨha* is, however, much closer to the Ravothaṭa than the Shangana-Ṭonga Elephants; the latter are not unlike the lower classes, the dwellers in the slums, as compared with the aristocracy, among us. Through sagacity and some forms of achievement, they can rise in the scale, but as yet intermarriage is frowned upon and there are some strong barriers between them. What we wish to point out is that the Elephants of Ravothaṭa are far more closely associated with their immediate blood relatives and their relatives-in-law, whether they be Elephants or Lions or Pigs or what not, than with Elephants of Selowa or other Elephants, including far-off *nanwothata*; and by far off we mean not merely any one of the sub-group within which kinship terms and behaviour obtain, but also any one of this lineage who lives far away or with whom there is no agreement. And yet there is something more to the matter. The history of the Ravothaṭa, their very early association with the royal group as messengers on the way from Rhodesia, the fact that since the earliest times their heads held an extensive district and still do, their prestige as makers of the skin of the sacred drums, all this and more places them in a special position. These things distinguish the Ravothaṭa as a group; they are like the crest of a noble family or like its traditions. They are scattered all over the tribe, it is true, and any ordinary member of the group would not presume to give himself airs because of the achievements of the past. They never act together, except within the limits of the interested family or lineage, just as happens anywhere else; yet there is some consciousness of belonging together, as indeed there is among families among us.

The same may be said of any other groups in Ulovedu. There are, for instance, the *nanwalena*, so closely linked to the royal group to-day

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that they are called the *khɛvo* of Tshazi. Their history also dates back to the earliest times, when they were Tshazi quite unrelated to the *khɛvo*. They are now and have been since the time of Khiali (*c.* 1740) the great maternal uncles of the royal group. They have their distinctive praise-titles and also a distinctive laudatory response. If one of the Mavulana is called by his superior he answers by prefixing his words with the praise *moni*. These laudatory responses (for which there is no generic name) are found only among a few groups. The Ravothaṭa say *nemula*, the Crocodiles of Ʋudupi *myagani*, the *khɛvo mulenyazi*, the Dipanyika *ngpya*, some Venda (those from Twsale) *ngo*, the Khaḍa *khɛnɛlo*, and the Lions of Magwale *maan*. This laudatory response honours both the speaker and the person addressed; and it occurs sometimes in the great praises of the group—for instance, 'Mavulana of Ʋutshazi! At Makhifaja, the place of pasturing, we pasture our cattle in autumn; at Ḍaja it is that the cattle graze in spring. We are *moni*.' A specific response does not, however, belong to the whole group. You may hear a *khɛvo* say *mule-myazi*, but, after all, the Tswale also call themselves *khɛvo*, and they say *ngo*, while the Mahasha, who are *khɛvo ratholɛ*, may answer *mulovedu ratholɛ*, and a Crocodile of Ʋudupi, *vudupi vya mamyaka*.

The cluster, such as all the Pigs or all the Elephants, never has one common praise-title. One does not even find a common praise for many groups or sub-groups, such as the Crocodiles, say, of Ʋudupi; and the same is true of most of the groups. The members of some of the groups and sub-groups use common praise-titles, but the really live praises, those that stir people and stand as a symbol of their unity, are the district praises. They are taught in the *vyali* initiation and are sung when beer is brought by the district to the queen. The district praise may or may not coincide with the praise of the sub-group or lineage of the head of the district. The Mudiga of Madumani, for instance, one of the sub-groups of the Mudiga, identify themselves closely with the royal group, but their distinctive praise-title refers to the mountain of their district, just as the distinctive praise of the Mudiga of Mareroni, another district, refers to the place name as well as to a forebear to whom the district was originally given. In addition, both Madumani and Mareroni have the old Mudiga praise, 'You are hemmed in [by lions]' (*le a dipuu*). The local district praise is far more alive than the group or sub-group praise, if it exists at all, in the case of people living in the district who are not Mudiga, but Crocodiles or Elephants or Lions and so on. It is thus far more usually a locality than a group praise, though, with regard to the people of the lineage of the head, it often is both. The exquisite poetry of these praise-names cannot easily be rendered in English, '*Ʋuuga vya uuga hula ea na*', the praise of Levhi, we may translate as 'When it thunders at Ʋuuga, the rain rains', but we cannot recapture the rumbling of the *u*'s nor the pattering of the *a*'s.

Let us look more closely at the Crocodiles. They are by no means a real group at all. At Matsui, where one of them is a district head, they are very closely linked to the royal nucleus; the mother of Matsui was a relative of Mamujaji the mother of the first Mujaji, and it is at Matsui that the cow Mamujaji, belonging to the head of the district, is dedicated

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571 619 to the spirit of Mamujaji. These Matsui Crocodiles, though they can trace their ancestry to the Ngwato of Bechuanaland, are, firstly, a closely linked lineage in their district and, secondly, they are relatives-in-law of the royal group as well as of several other groups, including Masulana; but the other Crocodile groups never so much as obtrude themselves in their interests or consideration. There are the Crocodiles of Maunadala, who also answer *nyigusi*; yet they have a distinctive praise in which they refer to themselves as the 'outcasts of the rain' (*murɔha wa metsi a bula*), because they are unable to make rain. They also are Crocodiles of Dudupi, but they are quite distinctive. They have a long history; they lived on the furthermost southern boundaries of Duloedu relatively independent even for these parts; they held their national 'schools', as they still do to-day, with scant deference to the precedence that should be accorded to the queen; and among them are celebrated doctors of the *nahwera*, *nyali*, and *gomana* complex of institutions. They owe their solidarity not so much to their common ancestry as to their concentration in a district in which they have been able to rule themselves and to build up their own traditions; but it is the solidarity of the people of Maunadala, whatever their totem or ancestry, not that of the Crocodiles. And much the same applies to Khaja, the Elephants of Sefavusi, also called *ɓa Khalaga*. Their genetic relationship with the Leba, though, by way of derogation, affirmed by their neighbours, cannot be credited; there is no association, no intermarriage, no acknowledged relationship with the Leba. Their immediate alliance is to Khaja and the district; their ultimate alliance is with the royal nuclear group; with other Elephants they have nothing in common. And so we may go through all the constituent groups.

We have paid enough to dispel the idea that the tie of real or supposed common ancestry in itself is of importance. In the larger groups the union that exists is due to other factors. The bonds within them do not even necessarily imply an informal feeling of preferential comradeship. The groups and sub-groups are not as such charged with specific functions, though, as we have seen, individuals in them may have special functions. For some time now one of the families of the Mudiga has been responsible for distributing the rain medicine (*mufuga*), but it would be a conception foreign to the Lovedu that the Mudiga only could be entrusted with this work. Not only Ramafalo, a Pig of Lunda, but many others of different groups are doctors of rain; and the same applies to other special positions.

571 794 619 It is not difficult to see how these things work. One may still observe the process of the introduction of a new cult in neighbouring tribes. Rasekwalo, a Crocodile, recently brought the *gomana* to the Tswale tribe, just as another Crocodile brought it to the Dirwa of Makhatho. By running the 'school', these foreigners pocket some of the fees and naturally try to safeguard their rights. Their children follow them and the special function or privilege appears to be attached to the group of Crocodiles. But in time the drums of the cult become the drums, not of the Rasekwalo, but of the chief; his descendants may still take a prominent part, not because they are Crocodiles, but because some of the secrets

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and medicines are in their hands, or rather in the hands, not of the group, but of the specific family. That family may be honoured by being given a district to rule, and, as marriage is patrilocal, the area gradually may contain a fair percentage of the lineage of Crocodiles of Ramakwalo. They may be lucky and retain the privilege, but there need be no necessary continued association between the *ramakwalo* and the *gomana*. All depends on the circumstances.

No one thinks of a certain group as having certain functions, from which other groups are excluded. Yet only some district heads may, for instance, hold the great national 'schools'; it is rather the privilege of those heads whose people have traditionally held them. But this is not considered to be a privilege of the groups; it is the privilege of a lineage if that lineage happens also to be in charge of a district, for the organization is territorial. The Lovedu, indeed, use the word *khoro*, but, as applied to groups of people, it does not mean a segment of any kin group. One speaks of the *khoro* of Mavulana, for instance; but the term refers to the people that live in the district of Mavulana, not the *ramavulana* who are scattered over many districts. One may even speak of the *khoro* of Mulogwane, meaning a section of the capital which was in charge of Mulogwane. Equally, one hears of the groups, the Mudigs, the Mabasha, the Crocodiles of Dudupi and so on spoken of as the *dikhoro* of the tribe. The connotation of the term is quite indefinite; it is as likely to refer to a group or sub-group of people as to a district; the word is not commonly used and is considered to be foreign.

The patrilineal groups or sub-groups have as such no functions. They do not regulate marriage, nor do they imply co-operation and mutual helpfulness. They are not at the basis of solidarity in legal and political situations. It is not unilateral grouping which unites people in their common interests or common activities, except when we come to the smaller sub-divisions, in which close relationship is acknowledged. If there was any real cohesion within them, the groups or sub-groups would cut across both tribes and districts; they would constitute a challenge to the principle of local contiguity, and the culture would be as diverse as the groups are numerous. Lack of group cohesion helps the diffusion of the fundamental values and institutions. There is great diversity in details, but the broad pattern of the culture stands out boldly. Unilateral grouping of a smaller kind, such as the core of a lineage, is not disruptive, for, on the one hand, the lineages which give tone to the remarkably autonomous districts are intimately linked with the queen and the tribal structure and, on the other hand, they harmonize admirably with that local unit which is a great political unit. Co-residence tends to be limited to the immediately effective lineage, the regulative principle being patrilocal marriage. The sentiments developing about co-residence are strengthened by inheritance and succession in the male line; the core of the lineage has common property and other interests. The segregation of this core is promoted by the tendency to take a name which, according to the circumstances, is the name of a grandfather or a father. It is the lineage, or, rather, the operative segment of a lineage, that may be regarded as an important institution in the society.

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571 613 The patrilineal lineage, however, is a formal rather than a friendly group, at least when one goes beyond the brothers' sons of one father who, as the phrase goes, 'share even the head of a locust'. There is nothing, however, apart from the name of its members which divides it from sub-groups or groups. It has no generic name and no observances such as special milk or other taboos; but marriage within the patrilineal lineage is incest, at least outside the royal family. It is the group which exercises certain kinds of control; though it must be remembered that the head of a lineage is head only of his, not of his brother's or even his son's village. Within the lineage there is more often than not considerable friction. The conflict is a conflict about legal precedences, for if seniority is emphasized in the society, if the influence and status of a man or a woman depends largely upon his or her age or seniority in a certain position, it is the chief son or daughter, the issue of a man's mother's brother's daughter, however young he may be, who steps into the shoes of his father. A younger brother, whatever his legal status by this reckoning, calls his elder brothers 'great one' (*mukulu*) and later in life, when the chief brother becomes district head or councillor, there is at least the 'war of the eyes' between them. You will see struggles for influence and position everywhere within the lineage for this reason. The enormous weight of the social structure is massed behind the chief son; but seniority is given precedence in the 'schools' and in the kinship terminology.

571 602 It is not our intention to give more than a glimpse of the patrilineal lineage. But it is necessary to insist, on the one hand, that it is the *mulogo* relatives, both on the father's and on the mother's side, that the Lovedu have constantly in mind, and, on the other hand, that the groups with the most impressive reciprocal rights and obligations are the *vaghalulu* and the *vamakhulu*. In the most general sense and whenever these groupings are spoken of as linked groups of people, the *vaghalulu* are the people where one gets bridegrooms—that is, it gives *mawunalo cattle* and receives brides. The *vamakhulu* in this context are the people who supply the brides and in return receive cattle. These two terms, in other contexts, have other connotations; for instance, the *vaghalulu* include all one's grandchildren, own and classificatory, but the term also refers to children of one's sister (man speaking). The pivot of the alignment of the two groupings is the cattle-linking of brother and sister and its co-ordination with cross-cousin marriage. The primary linking of brother and sister, described elsewhere, is immensely strong; and this strength is transmitted to the further linking of the two groups. The *vaghalulu* and the *vamakhulu* are not so much separate groups as interlinked people, and the bonds between them are partly kinship bonds, for they both are part of the *mulogo*; but the specially emphasized link is the link forged by the cattle. The linkage must, in its widest application, be regarded as binding together people who do not live together.

The patrilineal lineage is the core of co-residence units, such as the village and the districts. But the strongest links between these units are the links binding together the *vaghalulu* and the *vamakhulu*; they are the cattle links. The cattle forge links within the *mulogo*, a much wider group, ramifying both through males and females throughout the society. But

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kinship terminology and behaviour patterns, because they effectively operate only within narrow limits and are unsupported by tangible reciprocities beyond these limits—though distant relationship is spoken of as a 'flavour that is familiar' (*ledugcla*, literally, a salty taste)—cannot hold together widely spread groups without assistance from other social arrangements. And this is precisely where the complex of kin segregated out by the cattle plays its decisive part. In generation after generation the links are renewed as grandfathers, fathers, sons, and grandsons all take their chief wives from and send their cattle to the same group. The bridegrooms not only give the cattle, they are perpetually giving all their lives, assisting the group of the brides in paying their debts and helping its male members with *manyunalo* and in a hundred other ways; on the other hand, the brides or parents-in-law must always honour the bridegrooms and must maintain relationship with them by periodically bringing beer. These reciprocal obligations are at the very basis of the social system, of the interrelations between villages, of the bonds between the districts, and, finally, of the vast and intricate system that binds the nuclear group to the other groups and to the districts. If the lineages are the bricks out of which the society is constructed, the *mulɔgɔ* and particularly the cattle-relatives (*mulɔgɔ na dikhomu*) constitute the straw and the mortar, even the steel framework. It is also within the grouping brought about by these cattle that the fiercest conflicts occur. The price that is paid for a system, without which the fundamental structure and interrelations of the society might crumble to the ground, is certainly great; but in view of the functions of this system, it is perhaps not too great.

The *manyunalo* system is also closely associated with the hierarchy of rank within the household. For the chief house of a polygynist is the house established by the cattle he received from the marriage of his sister; and at the same time the mistress of this house is his cattle-linked cross-cousin. The rewards of rank thus support the *manyunalo* system. But rank reckoned in this way is not completely co-ordinated with seniority and other arrangements in the society. Some of the conflicts that arise are mentioned elsewhere. Here we shall refer briefly to social groupings based upon age. Firstly, there are age-mates (*thaga*). Girls, on the one hand, and boys, on the other, from an early age club together in their games and their activities. The group is a very loose one, wholly unorganized from without; it is not unlike our play gangs. Techniques of co-operation and group cohesion are well developed, especially among herdboys. They have their games, their heroes, and their bullies; their loyalties are, in a sense, in conflict with adults, but they are not anti-social. They may not tell tales out of school; if they do, adults will dismiss the matter as nonsense. Girls bathe together, get firewood together, play and stamp mealies together. They know one another's love affairs, they share one another's troubles. This group of age-mates is purely localised; it does not extend beyond the district and is often confined to a few neighbouring villages. In later life these age-mates continue to be on friendly, even intimate and joking terms—that is, as far as such is possible when they are also relatives. Among girls especially,

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535 male advances can be prevented from becoming dangerous. These are *digwa*, secret things or mummeries.

The last night of the ceremony is devoted to dancing and the showing of many *digwa*. It is *khilalowesi*, the night when one sleeps standing—that is, does not sleep at all, though, since people just take a nap any time they feel tired, the name is somewhat exaggerated. All the women of the area who wish to attend gather either in the village, from which men will be debarred, or at a secluded spot somewhere near, bringing with them mealies and nuts to roast and eat while there. There is a great deal of dancing and singing. The greatest *digwa* are shown at about 3 a.m., after a period of comparative quiet that sets in towards midnight, when most of the people begin to doze around the fires, and these continue until dawn, when disguised figures come dancing in. Each mummery has its own meaning, but this is not clear to the initiate, who does not even see many of them. In the morning, while the girls are at the [302] river, the hut of seclusion is swept and freshly smeared. On her return, after having her head shaved along the sides and back, leaving a circular top, which is a form of hairdress much liked by girls and associated with ritual occasions, the girl is anointed with fat and, except when she is of [292] the royal family, also with ochre. She is given three skins to wear, a frontal covering, a rear covering, and a skin to wear over the shoulders like a cloak. Round her neck is a thick collarette of beads. When dressed, the girl has respectfully to salute the assembled company of women in the courtyard by lying down on one side, palms held together. Now follows a few days during which the novice speaks to no one and walks with bent head, fists clenched and held to the breast. She is taken by the [431] elder girls to greet various relations, who must *nose* her by means of a small gift before she can rise. A month or more after the ceremony a grand beer-party is given by the girl's parents for the women of the area, [571] who, at a spot near which men are not allowed, have a dance of *digwa*, specially disguised figures. When the novice has been through the requisite number of ceremonies, she is taken to the queen or the wife of the district head to be beaten with a stick as a sign of her graduation.

881 Boys' initiation (*vudiga*) is much more spectacular than the *khoda*. Typically it is held by the whole tribe every twelve to fifteen years, but some district heads occasionally do not wait for the authority of the queen. The last *vudiga* upon a national scale was in 1919, but since then there have been local lodges, such as the one held by the district head Maunadala in 1937. The interval of more than twenty years is not considered extraordinary. Sometimes in the past there were delays, especially in the latter half of the reigns of queens, because, so it is said, they wished to postpone their ritual end, which coincided with the fourth initiation after their accession. In 1938–9 the *nyali*, or girls' initiation, was revived after thirty-five years, partly as a preliminary to the next boys' initiation; and if within a year or so there is a *vudiga*, it will be the third of a reign that has already lasted forty-three years. There are other reasons for the present delay. The *vudiga* involves an immense organization, brings all public activities, such as the courts, to a standstill, upsets the economic routine, and concentrates energies upon one supreme

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case of presentation. Masetha, district head of Mareroni, some thirty-eight years ago gave his daughter, Muthatso, to the queen. Muthatso after a time was allotted to Khidima, the queen's maternal uncle. Later Khidima sent a daughter to be one of the wives of the queen and this girl in turn was given by the queen to Nagambi, district head of Maulwi. Meanwhile Masetha's son, Muhale, succeeded at Mareroni and sent the only issue of his wife, the daughter Makwajo, to the queen (1936). The next ruler at Mareroni will be either Makwajo or an heir raised by the wife acquired with the cattle given by the queen as *manyunalo* for Makwajo. Already these arrangements link the district heads of Mareroni and of Maulwi with the queen and one of her nobles, and also with one another. The network is indefinitely continued in all directions, and though its ends appear to diverge, they centre in the queen and become interlinked at many points. For instance, to Rasodi, a younger brother of Nagambi, the queen gave Makwada, her wife, who came from Malematsha, an important district head, and as a result Rasodi's son must marry at Malematsha's. Once these interrelations are established, they set into motion the whole social system and the reciprocities which double the links and perpetuate the interrelations. In the district of the capital the ramifications of exchanges and re-exchanges are so complex as to defy analysis.

Broadly speaking, districts may be divided into those given to one of the old *kwena* or royal groups (of Muhale, of Mudiga and of Mahasha), those originating from *nafanwi*, and those held by heads of foreign groups. The so-called *nafanwi* districts constitute a composite group, because women do not normally succeed to one another. We have already mentioned elsewhere how the district Matsui was given by Mujaji I to her wife, who, marrying a Crocodile, was succeeded by her son Matsui and his line of Crocodiles. In 34 per cent. of the 100 districts we know well enough to trace their origin, the position has not been very different. Today sixty of these 100 districts are held by the royal groups and forty by foreign groups, and of those held by foreigners sixteen were acquired, as Matsui was, through *nafanwi*. Thus 40 per cent. of the foreign and 30 per cent. of the *kwena* districts, as far as we know, were originally handed to wives of the chiefs. Districts may originate in many other ways. It was customary for the kings to place their districts under sisters and brothers and temporarily also under their wives. Their wives could not as easily as among the queens consolidate their position, as they were unable to send their daughters as wives to the king, whereas now they can and do send such wives to the queens. Districts were also given to the great messengers (*didima*) of the chiefs; to foreigners, who, though they came with no large following, were renowned doctors of the national 'schools', some of which they introduced; to men who gave the queen cattle and a wife, and occasionally to those who had rendered services of value.

It does not much matter how a district originates from the point of view of the links that are gradually established with the queen and with one another. If foreigners come with a large, compact body of followers, they are often given an area and in return send their daughters as wives

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634 563 571 to the queen. A Ṭalerwa group came from the west in Khiali's reign (*c.* 1740), had a *mujanoni* at the capital and were given a large district. Malematsha, a son of the *mujanoni*, having married a daughter of Mugɔdɔ, the next chief, was given half the district, the other half being ruled by the Ṭalerwa head. By these arrangements the Ṭalerwa line became *nemakhadu* of Malematsha, whose son succeeded to the whole area in 1895, when the Ṭalerwa ruling family left as the result of famine. The Malematsha are *nafukadu* of the royal Lovedu. At Bagoni, which was originally given by Mujaji I to her younger brother, Murwatsɛpa, there now rules Mukupi, daughter of Murwatsɛpa's son. Mukupi had been the wife of Mujaji II, but, as there was no living male heir, she was released by the queen so as to enable her to rule the area. The true heir, son of the girl whom Mukupi's brother, had he lived, would have married (for the girl was the brother's cattle-linked cross-cousin), is now about forty-five years of age. It is doubtful whether he will ever succeed, for Mukupi is an ambitious and important woman, a district head who, like the queen, has no legal husband, but several wives; she is related to the queen and her councillors in a dozen ways, the most important being that she is *makhadi* of the queen and was wife of Mujaji II. Relela has a long history, but we need go no further back than the time when it was entrusted by Mujaji I to Mathogani, daughter of Mugɔdɔ, the chief, and *mujanoni* of Mujaji I. Mathogani married first Rampi and, after his death, Mɔhotela, Rampi's brother. Kwathi, son of the latter, who was given a *mujanoni* by Mujaji II, for reasons we need not here consider, usurped the headship. Segute is a district given by Mujaji II to her wife Makhicane, who was daughter of a Venda chief, and, as Makhicane had no issue, she was succeeded by her sister's son, the sister having married a direct male descendant of the elder brother of Mujaji I. This elder brother, Malegudu, had a daughter, Magɔɔo, who became *mujanoni* of Mujaji II. Mujaji III made Magɔɔo head of Maulwi, and Magɔɔo's son, Mugɔdɔ, was the man who was chosen to raise the next heir to the throne. A son of Mugɔdɔ by his chief wife (not the queen) is now district head at Maulwi. These are but some of the cases, much simplified, that give us an idea of the manner in which districts originate and become linked up with the queen and the royal group.

634 571 554 The district is a political and a territorial unit, often very small in size, and usually having a distinctive praise. The size varies from half a square mile to nine square miles, the average in the congested reserve being under one square mile. Originally the districts were larger, but, as European occupation advanced, the old districts were divided and subdivided to make room for the heads that were ousted. The praises, already mentioned elsewhere, are generally praises of the group or subgroup of the head. At Maumadala, though he migrated from Naji, near Tzaneen in the south, to the tribal farm Khimɔbɔlwa to the north of Uɔlovedu, they still sing, 'Crocodile of Mugasi, outcast (*muvɔka*) of the rain water,' because his people had no rain-making magic; when Mahubusana brings beer, the praise runs, 'At the kitchen-hut of Magwala of Khodini, where potatoes are eaten,' though Mahubusana now rules near the capital, having long ago left Khodini, to the south of Uɔlovedu;

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and at Khimanda one may hear, 'You are drunk, you of Maleakhotho, you who are habitual smokers of hemp.' Not only have sub-groups and even lineages distinctive variations upon perhaps a common praise of the group, but there are different praises appropriate to different occasions.

Owing to patrilocal marriage, the patrilineal kin tend to form the core of a district. These cores were perhaps more distinct in the distant past, for it is quite clear that, for instance, the districts of the Mudiga lay towards the east, while those of the Mahasha clustered together in the north-west. But members of the Mudiga and Mahasha were always scattered throughout the tribe and never co-operated as groups in any political situation. We must not think of co-operating patrilineal groups, for 'A man has influence and fortune where he has relatives-in-law'. The core of the district may be the brothers, father's brothers, and their sons in the district, but generally the mother is a link with one outside district and sisters and daughters marry into others. There is seldom a numerical preponderance of the lineage of the district head in the territorial unit, their number and solidarity depending upon a large number of factors: length of residence or of headship, the homogeneity of diversity, size, dispersion or concentration of the group that immigrated and was given a district, agreement within the group, and so on.

We may take Matsui as an example. The head, a Crocodile, and his male forebears have ruled the area for over a century. Matsui is at one point immediately adjacent to the capital, but it is also near a whole chain of old Crocodile settlements, which 150 years ago extended from Mamaila in the north to Uudupi in the south. The district is largely a valley area and thus avoided by the Lovedu royal group, but extensively occupied by the Shangana-Tongs since about 1840. The population is 22 per cent. Crocodile and 14 per cent. Lovedu; 47 per cent. of the people belong to foreign groups or sub-groups, with whom intermarriage is not wholly disapproved, and 17 per cent. Shangana-Tongs. The Crocodiles are patrilineal kin and the Lovedu are relatives-in-law of the head, but the links with the Shangana-Tongs are those of neighbourliness, some friendship, and some economic interdependence. Of the intermarriageable foreigners, 20 per cent. are related in some way to the head, being mostly relatives of the line of 'messengers' (*didumi*) of the district head. It is generally felt that the messengers should not be patrilineally related to the head because of possible conflicts, but their alliance with the head is usually a close and long-established one. In the case of Matsui, the links are not only through the capital where the group of the 'messenger' used to be officials, but also through the district head's brother, who is the *mughululu* (cattle-linked sister's son) of the 'messenger'. In other districts, of course, the dispositions are different: on the hills, for instance, there are no Shangana-Tongs and few of the more or less outcast *varitha*. The diversity of the groups is very great, as we have indicated elsewhere, but the manner in which they have been interwoven into the royal group, chiefly through the districts, is even more impressive.

The patrilineal core of the district is no more important than the link through the bilateral kin, especially through mothers and sisters and daughters and the cattle-chains forged by them with other areas and with

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181 is complete without beer. During some seasons of the year, people are
273 in a perpetual state of exhilaration: some are singing or gossiping near the beer pots; some are expectantly watching their concoctions mature; and the rest are recovering from the last beer drink. Drunkenness is deprecated, but drink induces a state in which behaviour otherwise frowned upon is tolerantly regarded. Beer parties should be orderly, for they are occasions when some of the restraints of life may be relaxed and when jealousies and dissensions, normally under control, may rise to the surface. Though ostentation, even self-praise, is allowed in states of exhilaration, beer must be drunk with decorum; it should be lingered over, not bolted in haste.

181 A multitude of values centre round beer. It is a nourishing food, taking
273 the place of meat feasts elsewhere; it is also the food of the gods. Beer is so
574 great an attraction that it would be sheer lack of balance to keep one's appointments, to attend to other business, or to be worried by the passage of time if a beer party is imminent or in progress. A man's reputation for generosity depends upon his giving a beer party occasionally, although the entertainment is invariably in connexion with some definite purpose, economic, ritual, or religious. Beer is the medium of goodwill exchanges between relatives-in-law and between neighbours; and, as belonging to this context, the tributary beer from the districts to the queen is transformed from a burden to a pleasure. Beer is at the basis of the group of
[571] *vulejana* (literally, those who eat together), composed largely of kin and neighbours who often co-operate in economic activities; this group cuts across the lines of the district and includes even such alien elements as Shangana-Tonga; and the main obligation of its members is to call fellow members to any beer that is available. Reconciliations are effected by beer, which also 'opens the way for the mother-in-law'. All the essential reciprocities are maintained by beer: a man returns a borrowed article with beer; a family doctor, instead of being paid for his services, expects to be called to the family beer; and in the work party beer removes labour from the category of subservience to that of mutuality. With beer one thanks, but with money one pays.

181 None of the interests that we have considered are intensive, and none of the striving, whether for security, achievement, or recreation, is concentrated. The diverse ideals and achievements that are permitted in social arrangements enrich personality and encourage the qualities of balance and wisdom; and the insistence upon a reciprocity which is not motivated by distrust, conditions mutual helpfulness and suppresses aggressiveness and display. An important clue to Lovedu *Weltanschauung* is their attitude to what may be considered to be ultimate power, the power through which the final goals of life and security can be attained. Such power is sought, not in privations, tortures, visions, and self-oblivion, but in normality, equanimity and maturity; it is derived, not from breaking the ordinary bounds of experience to escape to another world and from transcending the limits of the senses, but from manipulating mundane forces and from identification with nature. The Lovedu do not compel cosmic laws by the power of ecstatic states or trances; they bend these laws to their purposes by supplicating the queen and

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Lobedu themselves. The society is remarkably egalitarian and there is no concentration of wealth in the hands of the ruling group. Nor would this be easy in a tribe in which the limited resources in property (in cattle) are used primarily for, and are constantly being converted into, marriage alliances.

Other distinctive features of the Lobedu are their marked agricultural bias; a fertility cult with sacred drums; masked dancing; ritual arrangements in ancestor worship (in the form of impersonation of the spirits, the predominance of beer offerings and the *phasa* rite of spurting water out of the mouth as an accompaniment to prayer) which link them more closely to the tribes to the north than to their southern Nguni and Sotho neighbours where the blood sacrifice and cattle cult are more clearly marked.

Agnatic Groupings

Despite the fact that they are ruled by a queen and that women can and do hold important political and religious positions the Lobedu are a patrilineal people in the sense that a man belongs to his father's lineage, property is inherited in the male line and marriage is patrilocal. The tribe is made up of a large number of different totemic groups, Lion, Elephant, Crocodile, Wild Pig, none of which, not even the royal Lobedu totem, is confined to the Lobedu tribe. All these totems are found in neighbouring tribes and many also in other parts of the Transvaal and elsewhere. A few groups have no totem (*mutupo*) but designate themselves by their place of origin, e.g., *Mokhalaga*. Groups which have the same totem do not consider themselves related if they come from different places of origin. Elephant of Khalaga are thus unrelated to Elephant of Tsubye or Elephant of Thobolo. People sometimes swear by (*esa*) their totem and are supposed to but do not always abstain from eating it. The totemic name is useful only as a distinguishing mark; e.g., in divination the bones may indicate a person of the Elephant or Lion totem as responsible for illness or theft. Beyond this the *mutupo* has little meaning and today many of the young people do not even use the term. The totemic group is not exogamous.

The lineage has no distinguishing name, the term *mulolo* or

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side, not to the Sekhobo side. The lineage head's father's mother had been a 'wife' and close relative of the queen, a connection which the Sekhobo family tended to stress socially and which was reflected also in their religion (they had a cow dedicated to and representing her).

The Lobedu lineage, in fact, does not operate as a group to the exclusion of other kin except in informal consultations on matters of marriage or litigation; and the lineage does not emerge in everyday activities as a clearly marked unit. A *makhobo* such as the above is one of two or three rare occasions when the lineage comes together and in every one of these cases both sons and daughters and their children are invited to be present.

Lobedu homesteads vary in size and composition from a typical minimum of a married man with his mother, wife and children to a group of half-brothers, their mothers, wives, children and grandchildren, still living together after the death of the father. Very often other relatives, such as a widowed sister and her children, a maternal relative or an affine of the head are to be found living in the homestead. But these are the least stable elements and tend to move away in a short time. Though small units continuously hive off, and there is a good deal of change in the small homesteads of more recent immigrants or where a migrant labourer husband has never returned, the Lobedu homestead is on the whole, especially in the case of the chief son and his descendants, a remarkably stable unit. Over a period of thirty years most of the larger homesteads known to me have remained in the same place or been rebuilt a few hundred yards from the old site after the death of their head.

Economy of the Lobedu and their attitude to property

The economy of the Lobedu is a subsistence one based mainly on agriculture and stock-raising supplemented by migrant labour in European areas. Land for cultivation is allotted to individuals by the district head. Once allocated, fields are inherited in the male line and cannot be taken away so long as they are in effective use. Only if a man moves away from the district or is chased out as a witch can he and his family lose

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their right to their lands. It is usual for people to 'beg' fields also in areas other than that in which they are living, partly to take advantage of diverse climatic conditions, partly because of land shortage; but their right to these is not as strong as to fields in their home district. Land shortage has not yet reached serious proportions owing to the fact that since the 1920's the tribe has been buying up sparsely populated Crown lands to the north. Grazing and the right to collect wood, thatching grass, wild fruits and plants for economic use are free to all, though herd-boys jealously guard good pastures in their own areas to which they feel they have first right.

Livestock takes the form chiefly of cattle and goats; fowls, still forbidden at the Capital, were introduced by the Tsonga; donkeys and pigs are a European innovation, the former being popular among Christians for use in ploughing and transport, the latter being kept largely by women for exchange purposes. Though of considerable economic importance cattle play little part in the diet of the people, being used mainly for ritual purposes and as bride-price. They move in a chain of marriage exchanges from one family to another, creating and maintaining social links and knitting together in preferred marriage the descendants of brothers and sisters. It was calculated in 1939 that bride-price accounted for 95 per cent of all transfers of cattle in the Lobedu tribe.[1] Cattle coming in as bride-price are not supposed to be used for any other purpose than marriage for, unlike the Zulu who kept large herds, constantly replenished in the old days by raids against neighbours, most Lobedu families do not possess cattle except for short periods of time.

Lobedu ideas of property and their attitude to its possession and accumulation are rather different from ours. The correct use of cattle in Lobedu eyes lies not in accumulation but in their investment in 'building a house', i.e., setting up a new social and economic unit of a wife and children. Surplus crops, similarly, are not accumulated but are generally consumed in a succession of after-harvest beer parties in honour of kin and affines which adds considerably to one's prestige. This, so often cited as evidence of wastefulness and lack of foresight is, in the absence of any really reliable termite- or pest-proof form of storage (which makes accumulation risky), a means of insur-

[1] Krige, J. D., 1939, p. 396.

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ance against future want by building up relations of friendship and goodwill with kin and neighbours whom you can call upon for assistance in time of need. Nor does property, as in Western society, command the services of others to any appreciable extent. The core of helpers in a work-party are there primarily because of ties of kinship and neighbourhood; the beer that is served may be enjoyed by any passer-by who wishes to join in. Traditionally, then, property is of value to the Lobedu only in so far as it can be consumed or meets an immediate need on the one hand or, on the other, is used for creating and maintaining social relationships. This is changing now under conditions of culture contact but the change is still largely confined to Christians.

There is not a great deal of exchange and what there is takes the form most frequently of gift exchange[1]. Property in the form of a gift is a tangible sign of a social relationship. A new bride speaks to no one in her new homestead until given a small gift in token of her new social relationship to the giver and the same holds for a newly-initiated boy or girl. Ties with one's maternal kin and with affines are also kept alive by gifts and gift-exchange. It is significant that agnatic ties are the only ones that do not require continuous gift-exchange. Yet even here a service rendered seldom goes unrewarded. Property and human relationships are, then, closely interlinked. That it is not possible always to separate economic and social relationship among the Lobedu is shown by the following examples. Just after the 1895 rinderpest Khidima, a royal relative, went to the queen, who is traditionally responsible for giving succour to orphans and the needy, to ask for money to buy mealies. She gave him some. A few years later he sent a messenger to her to say he 'had a baby daughter'. The queen accepted the gift and when the girl reached puberty presented her with a *shavi* goat according to custom. Cattle followed and the girl, Myakwane, was duly 'married' by the queen. This was the beginning of a permanent bride-giving-bride-receiving relationship, for in 1950 the queen sent a messenger to the widow of Myakwane's brother who had used his sister's cattle, to ask for her daughter in marriage. *'Ge lede dikhomo tja ka. Ge nyaga masadi a de a sikhidela*—I am following the tracks of my cattle.

[1] Krige, E. J., 1941.

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'I want a wife to come and stamp for me', said the queen. The girl was married by the queen and shortly after was given to the son of another 'wife' (*metaneni*) of the queen with whom she is now living at the Capital.

Sometimes the transaction takes on more of an economic character, a man pledging his daughter in order to receive economic help. Thus Jim's father in a period of starvation took his ten-year-old daughter to a man at Malemacha and said, 'I am starving and poor. Give me money. I have a girl, a *lobolo*'. Money was given to him and later when the girl was sent in marriage, cattle were handed over in the usual way. More commonly this technique was used when a man had no sister whose cattle he might use to marry with. He then went to a maternal or affinal relative or to a friend or even a stranger who had cattle, saying: '*Ge so khwa*—I have a knee', in reference to his procreative powers, thus pledging himself to send an as yet unborn daughter in marriage. Today such transactions have become infrequent since money can so easily be obtained by migrant labour or a loan can be repaid in money without having to pledge a daughter.

The cattle or other property (marriage hoes were used in the old days)[1] establish tangible obligations between the two families which can be upheld at law even though the contract is fulfilled only in the next generation or later. Moreover the bond is permanent: other marriages will follow the first from generation to generation in a manner that will be described below. The use of women in property transactions of this kind which is not considered to be derogatory by the Lobedu is all the more remarkable in the light of the very high position of, and the power wielded by, women in Lobedu social life.

Some Aspects of Marriage

It will be necessary before discussing the domestic cycle to examine briefly the nature of Lobedu marriage; for not only does marriage establish strong economic and social relation-

[1] These hoes were too large and heavy for tilling the soil and were merely kept in a hut. The chief councillor of the queen, a man of about eighty years old, still remembers the use of marriage hoes in a few cases in his boyhood. Six hoes or eight head of cattle passed in marriage at that time.

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suggesting that as the first wife was not strong they should send her uterine sister as a little 'follower' to help her. Finding that her son was agreeable she reported the matter to his eldest half-brother, head of the homestead, who discussed the matter with his brothers.

The ultimate guarantor of the interests and economic independence of the 'house' is the cattle-linked sister with whose bride-price the wife was obtained. As we have seen, she occupies a very special position in the 'house' built by her cattle. Even before her brother's bridal party arrives at his homestead with the new bride she is taken to his married sister's homestead where a goat is slaughtered for her in recognition of their special relationship. When the sister visits her old home she will 'put down her things' and make herself at home in the hut of the wife of her brother. She is the first to be called to beer there; she must be invited to all activities such as work-parties held by the 'house'; all sickness is reported to her; she is called in to discuss the marriage of all sons and daughters of that 'house'. She or her eldest uterine sister is the one who magically protects a new homestead by drawing a medicated branch in a magical circle around it. If her father and mother are dead she sees to it that her brother treats his wife properly. He cannot chase her away or divorce her unless his sister believes his action to be justifiable; and she may, and very often does, take her brother's wife to live with her in her husband's village if he ill-treats her. She has an interest in this 'house' for here her son will find a wife. When her brother dies it is she and her sisters who will distribute the inheritance. The sanction for her control is a religious one: if she is 'dissatisfied in her heart' this may 'stir up the ancestors' and cause a child of her brother to be ill—a very powerful weapon.

Development of a House

Let us consider the growth and development of a house for it is only by a very gradual process that a house reaches full stature. The marriage of every woman marks the birth of a new unit which may become in time an independent homestead though it does not always do so. This is possible at the earliest only when the eldest son has married a wife and

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592 often, if at all, only after the death of both the father and his
571 heir, the eldest brother who succeeded him as head of the homestead. Full independence is not an ideal that is striven for.

592 In its early stages the new unit or incipient 'house' is still
571 dependent on the bridegroom's natal house (house of orienta-
593 tion). The new bride works for her mother-in-law. She has no
66 fields of her own to begin with, no utensils, nor a hearth and very often not even a sleeping hut of her own, the young couple using the mother-in-law's sleeping hut while she sleeps in her kitchen hut. The bride cooks on her husband's mother's hearth, works with her husband in a field allocated to them and helps her mother-in-law in hers. The husband will, if he has not done so before bringing his bride home, build her a new hut after the marriage at any time convenient to him. Simeon made sun-dried bricks himself, paid one pound to have the walls built, had a work-party for the framework of the roof and did the thatching himself. A man's father may help him but usually a young man uses his own money earned by previous migrant labour.

A woman cooks for her mother-in-law until a new bride, either of her husband's brother or of her husband arrives when she may be given her own pots. When Simeon's second wife arrived both wives cooked together for the mother-in-law for a while. Then when they began to disagree one (the younger one in this case because she was unrelated) was given her own pots to cook separately. Being given her own hearth is an important thing in a woman's married life marked by a little ceremony and a visit home to announce her new status. Even when she has her own hearth, however, she must continue to provide food for her parents-in-law. Children are thus an insurance against old age and it is the duty and responsibility of a son, more particularly the youngest son, to care for his mother in her old age. The father may have young wives to care for him when his elder sons are married.

593 Even after his marriage a man remains under the jural control
571 of, and subordinate to, his father. Only after his father's death
571 is he free to choose whether to remain in the village under the heir or to hive off. Sometimes, though rarely, a married son does, however, quarrel with his father and move away. Mostly

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such a quarrel involves the mother rather than the son and the whole house hives off, the son taking his mother with him.

The birth of the first child is an important step in the development of a house. The Lobedu child is born in a homestead in which there are at least three generations represented—that of the grandmother, that of the parents, including usually also the father's brothers and unmarried sisters and that of his own contemporaries. The first child is tended largely by the father's mother while the mother goes about the hard work of stamping, working in the fields, fetching firewood if there are no young sisters of the husband to help, and cooking.

The husband's mother is an essential part of the household and has a dominating influence. She controls and advises her son, especially in regard to his relations with his wife and the needs of his children, and he usually defers to her knowledge and experience. Long after her sons are married and even when they have grandchildren the unit is known as her *muhu* (house). It would seem that a unit of husband, wife and child would hardly be viable in a subsistence economy based predominantly on the agricultural activities of the women. Even the smallest Lobedu homestead includes the husband's mother. It is only when there are several adolescent children or the cash earnings of the husband enable a wife to buy the staple food instead of relying wholly upon what she grows herself that smaller units can survive. Even then they generally live near, and attach themselves to, some relative.

Once children are born, the wife's brother (mother's brother to the children) begins to play a part in forging links between them and the relatives on the mother's side. He will give gifts to the sister's son (*mudukulu*) who often goes to stay for a while with his mother's people; and in his turn the sister's son whenever he returns from migrant labour will be expected to give a gift to his mother's brother. Sometimes he also helps a mother's brother with cattle to marry. As the size of a man's family increases more fields may be needed to feed the children and very often these are obtained by the wife from her own people.

The marriage of the first daughter brings about the first acquisition by the developing house of a large amount of property in bride-price and ensures, even in the absence of sons, the continuation of the house. As important is the fact

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that the man has now a son-in-law, whom he can approach for economic help whenever he is in need. His wife, too, if she needs anything can brew beer to take as *khirola* for her son-in-law, or crack open *morula* nuts and take them as a gift, in return for which he will give her money or whatever he can. *Khirola* may be taken even to the uterine brother of a son-in-law for he also is a *mudukulu*. A man looks more and more to his affines for economic help as his father ages and his brothers become involved in their own commitments. To the wife the marriage of her daughter is also very important for a different reason. This makes it possible for her to have a daughter-in-law. For on the marriage of her son a woman stops cooking and in addition has the help of her daughter-in-law in her garden work. If she has no son she can in the last resort always use the bride-price to 'marry' a girl herself who will relieve her of the most heavy and onerous household and agricultural work.

With the marriage of his sons there is a gradual handing over of the reins to the younger generation which is completed by the man's death, when the eldest son of his chief wife takes over his position and responsibilities. This is the point at which the house achieves its final independence economically (though not ritually).

It is interesting to note that Lobedu do not, like the Zulu, identify a lineage segment by its female foundress.

Death and Inheritance

On the death of a wife her husband must administer the affairs of her 'house' to its best advantage. If the children have any complaints they may, if their grandparents are dead, make them to the father's cattle-linked sister or to his eldest uterine sister who has considerable influence as 'priestess' of the family. If the father marries a woman with the cattle of the daughter of such a 'house' such wife will be attached to this house and the sons of the house could use the marriage cattle of the daughters of this woman to obtain wives.

When a married woman dies leaving very young children they are generally sent either to the mother's mother or to her sister to be reared. M's son and son's wife died in close succession leaving very young children. Shortly after, when his own

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the court cases. Later, when the heir came of age, a new homestead was built. When Mabulana died in the 1940's his daughter, a married woman who does not live in the area was made official district head. Her mother's brother came specially from the Capital to live in the area and help her by conducting cases.

The mother's brother is considered to be eminently suitable as adviser to a ruler. The queen, too, traditionally has a mother's brother as chief councillor. A mother's brother has no claim to succession yet is deeply interested in the welfare of his sister's child. He will see to it that the sister's child gets his rights. The position of the son of the *khadi* who is acting as regent is somewhat different. There is a Lobedu proverb saying '*Bya thaga moye ho dula mudzhulu*—where a master is lacking there sits the nephew'. And it is true that the son of a woman regent is often ruler in all but name. In the 1930's there were two blatant cases in which the rightful heirs of district heads who had long reached man's estate seemed in danger of permanently being ousted. In both cases in the long run when the *khadi* died the rightful heir was installed, in one of the cases on the expressed dying wish of the *khadi*. Right seems to prevail in the long run.

The Homestead Through Time

Basically a homestead consists of a group of 'houses' belonging to the wives of the head or of the head and his half-brothers. Other relatives may attach themselves to it but the core remains the group of agnates.

Many of the smaller homesteads that have all the appearance of being independent are found upon investigation to be portions (a 'house') of a neighbouring homestead, which has become separated in space but still considers itself part and acknowledges the authority and control of the senior homestead near by. The most obvious case of this arises where, owing to quarrels between co-wives, a husband has placed one of the wives in a homestead of her own and visits her there. If a wife has a married son then in the event of serious quarrels there is more likely to be a hiving off, the son moving to a different area with his mother and siblings.

In Figure 5 a very small homestead is shown. Here the

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woman, K, has, during her husband's prolonged absence in a labour centre, moved away from her fellow wives into another district in order to be near her married daughter. She lives in a small homestead with her married son, who is absent doing migrant labour, and her other children. In contrast to this is the homestead of a neighbour of hers who has five wives and

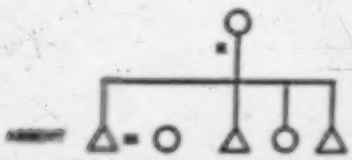

FIG. 5. Composition of a very small homestead.

whose ten brothers together with their wives and children still live with him in the homestead—a total of sixty-eight inmates (twenty-nine adults, thirty-nine children). Of these three married and two unmarried men are away doing migrant labour.

The domestic group indicated in Figure 6 originally lived in one homestead.

On A's death his chief son, B, inherited his youngest wife (No. 3) who as yet had no children. They all moved out of the old homestead, the sons (B and D) of A's two elder wives

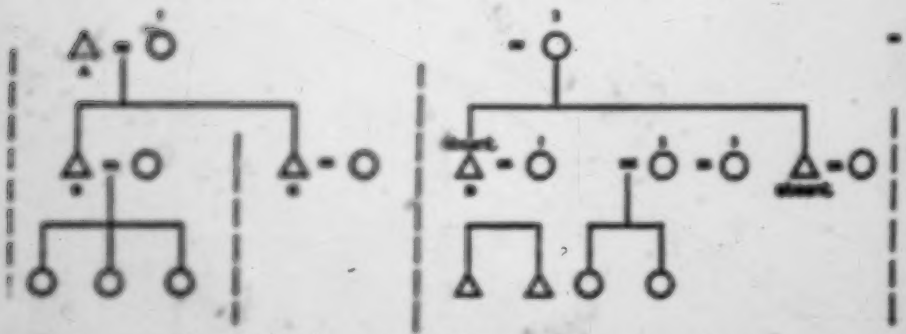

FIG. 6. Segmentation of a homestead on 'house' lines.

building separate homesteads next to one another, where I found them in 1958. The women in the homestead of D considered themselves part of the homestead of A and in the

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absence of their menfolk at labour centres, reported everything that took place to B. Later C moved away from his uterine brother B and in 1961 there were three separate homesteads.

The cleavage in a homestead then is on 'house' lines, though uterine brothers living together after the death of their father also eventually separate. The break may be the result of an accusation of witchcraft or there may be an amicable separation as in the case described above. Reasons for separating vary: Batamedi moved away from his uterine brother, a district headman, to satisfy political ambitions—he hoped to be made headman of an area to which his family had an ancient claim; Poke, a married man, left the homestead of his brother with his mother and siblings for health reasons, suspecting that someone in the homestead might be bewitching him and hoping that a change would improve his condition. After many years in a different district, he returned to live in the original homestead. Sons do not move away before the death of their father unless there has been a quarrel in which their mothers are involved, or unless they become Christians and marry Christian girls. Even the death of the father does not necessarily bring about the separation of his sons; brothers and half-brothers may live together for years. As they marry more wives the size of the families increases, the homestead becomes more congested, the likelihood of quarrels greater and gradually the 'houses' move asunder. If half-brothers and brothers have not separated before, then the final break-up of the old homestead will come with the death of the eldest brother. For it is rare for a man to live under a young heir of the generation below him. Close religious and social ties, however, persist long after separation. Half-brothers continue to 'inherit' each other's wives and there may be a good deal of co-operation in work-parties and much consultation in family affairs. Lobedu homesteads are stable over long periods and there is a great value attached to remaining together.

Preferential Marriage down the Generations

The development of the 'houses' in a homestead, leading to the gradual segmentation of the domestic group and separation of

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is thought to be so deeply attached to her daughter's children that she is always troubling them—wanting them to be named after her, to be given her beads to wear, to have a dedicated goat or shrine set up. One therefore sometimes finds three or four shrines in a homestead.

The Local Group

The local group reflects the balance that is achieved among the Lobedu between agnates on the one hand, and on the other, relatives on the mother's side and affines (one and the same thing depending on the generation from which they are viewed).

A random group of thirteen homesteads forming a neighbourhood, is shown in Figure 8. They are closely linked by agnatic,

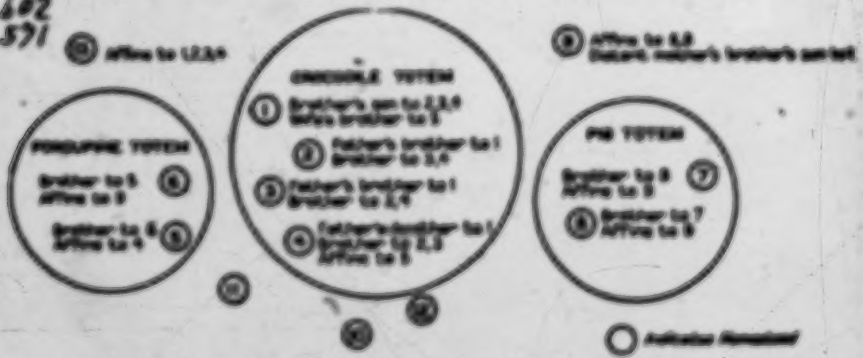

FIG. 8. Agnatic, cognatic and affinal ties in a neighbourhood.

cognatic and affinal ties and share in many economic, ritual and recreational activities.

These homesteads fall into three main clusters of agnates belonging to the Crocodile, Porcupine and Pig totems near which are two homesteads No. 9 and No. 13, which have affinal and cognatic links with these clusters, and three unrelated homesteads, Nos. 10, 11 and 12, the last-named being foreigners, Tsonga, who had little to do with the rest.

The Crocodile cluster (homesteads 1, 2, 3 and 4) had originally been a single homestead which had broken up on the death of the father, head of the district. Other close agnates lived a little further off, not shown on the diagram. This cluster

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was related to all except homesteads 10, 11 and 18: a sister of the head of homestead 1 was married in No. 13; a son in No. 4 of this cluster had married a Porcupine woman in No. 5; they had a distant mother's brother's son in No. 9 and they were related in the same way to two wives in the Pig group.

The Porcupine brothers for their part had a sister married in homestead 4 (Crocodile) and a daughter-in-law from No. 9. They therefore had affinal bonds also with two wives in the Pig group, sisters of this daughter-in-law.

The Pig group had married women from No. 9 and therefore had links also with No. 9's cross-cousins in the Crocodile cluster and with No. 9's affines, the Porcupines.

The manner in which kin of various kinds co-operate with each other and with neighbours could be seen very clearly when Enoch, head of homestead No. 9 had to meet a gift-exchange obligation involving the sending of beer to the head of a neighbouring district. The beer, made from mealies from Enoch's own fields was brewed by his mother and by his sister from homestead No. 8. When it was ready, a messenger was sent to notify (*rapa*) all their relatives (*maloko*). Calabashes for carrying the beer were borrowed from the neighbourhood and early in the afternoon a collection of women and a few men foregathered in the courtyard of Enoch's mother. There were ten calabashes and one petrol tin of beer, six baskets of Kaffir-corn and three half-filled enamel basins of grain into which the calabashes of beer were put for carrying. The grain was contributed by kin—by the cross-cousin in homestead No. 1; by the husbands (*bakhale*) of the two sisters in homesteads Nos. 6 and 8; by two father's sister's daughters living outside the area and by a sister of the 'wife' of his mother, also outside the area, all of whom were present for the occasion. Women from the whole neighbourhood turned out to carry the beer. After the eldest sister of Enoch had poured a little beer on the ground with a prayer for luck on the journey and had drawn a magic circle round the mouth of each calabash with a charm, the party set out with ululations of joy and much talking and noise. Kin of all kinds and neighbours all contributed to the success of the enterprise and all took part in the feasting at their destination where the beer was consumed and a beast slaughtered for their entertainment.

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Conclusion

Emerging clearly from this study is the fundamental role of property in maintaining the distinctive features of Lobedu social structure. The scarcity of cattle among the Lobedu and the fact that they play little part in subsistence, coupled with an attitude to property which makes its accumulation of little interest and in which economic aspects of property are not always clearly distinguished from the social relationships it creates and maintains—all these factors make for a social system in which the main function of cattle is their use as bride-price and in which women can be used in quasi-economic transactions without their status being in any way depressed thereby.

The independence of the 'house', a basic feature of the Lobedu lineage, likewise rests upon property, a husband being subject to strong sanctions to respect the economic independence of each house as against other similar units. Both husband and wife have an interest in the development of the 'house' as an entity. From the point of view of the husband each house, besides increasing his following and adding to his prestige, also adds to the number and strength of his relations with affines upon whom he can count for economic help and as friends and allies. '*Ba djealane ka ba khwane*—people who marry one another are people who agree', it is said when a man has the support of his affines. To the wife her 'house' is a means of personal fulfilment and advancement. She has considerable say over the property of her 'house'; everything she does for its advancement is for the benefit of her own sons, its heirs; the bride-price of her daughters ensures an old age free from arduous toil, while the marriage of her sons brings in addition the prestige and control that a mother has in the households of her sons and their wives. The 'house' is the most important unit in the structure of the husband's lineage yet at the same time has strong economic and social links with the wife's family.

An important principle in the social structure is preferential marriage between the son of a sister and the daughter of her uterine brother who has used her bride-price. This form of marriage and the moral right of a sister to a daughter-in-law from the 'house' established by her marriage cattle are on the

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of a woman to 'someone to stamp for her' from the 'house' created by her bride-price also enables the father of a woman who has no uterine brother to control to some extent, by the placement of his daughter's cattle, the marriage of her sons. Her husband 'follows the tracks of his cattle' to find a wife for his son but it is her father who determines where these 'tracks' will lead to.

There are thus to be found in Lobedu social structure a neat balance between the various kinds of kin; a combination of patrilineal principles with strong matrilineal bonds; a merging of ancestors on the father's and mother's side of the family; and an equality in the importance of paternal and maternal kin which is seen on all social and ritual occasions and is reflected also in the composition of local groups.